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Non-governmental organizations

Report of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations on the second part of its 1998 session (New York, 22–26 June and 1 July 1998)

Addendum

Summary

The present report contains two draft decisions calling for action by the Economic and Social Council.

By draft decision I, the Council would:

(a) Grant consultative status to 83 non-governmental organizations which had applied;

(b) Reclassify three organizations from Roster to special consultative status.

By draft decision II, the Council would authorize the Committee to hold a resumed session in order to complete the work of its 1998 session.

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I. Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council

1. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations recommends to the Economic and Social Council the following draft decisions:

DRAFT DECISION I

Applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides:

(a) To grant the following non-governmental organizations consultative status:

General consultative status

International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW)

Special consultative status

8th Day Centre for Justice

Association for Assistance to Families with Disabled Children

Association des états généraux des étudiants de l'Europe (AEGEE)

Association européenne contre les violences faites aux femmes au travail (AVFT)

Association of Interbalkan Women's Cooperation Societies

Association pour le progrès et la défense des droits des femmes maliennes (APDF)

Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women

Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR)

Centre of People's Help "Blagovest" – International Public Charitable Organization (CHP "Blagovest")

Centro di Ricerca e Documentazione Febbraio 74 (CERFE)

Children Australia

Chinese Women's Association of America/Chinese Women's Association America Foundation

Chinese Immigrants Services, Inc.

Croatian World Congress

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe

Federation européenne des femmes actives au foyer (FEFAF)

Femmes actives au foyer

Flora Tristan, Peruvian Women's Centre

Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)

Fundació EcoMediterrània

The Grail

Gram Bharati Samiti (GBS)

Grassroots Organization Operating Together in Sisterhood (GROOTS)

Il Cenacolo

INCORVUZ Corporation

Institute of Global Education

Institute of Inter-Balkan Relations

Inter-American Parliamentary Group on Population and Development

International Association for Feminist Economics

International Council of Chemical Associations

International First Aid Society

International Geothermal Association

International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE)

International Research Foundation for Development

International Wages for Housework Campaign

International Women Count Network

International Women's Democracy Centre

Italian Association for Women in Development (AIDOS)

Japanese Association of International Women's Rights (JAIWR)

Kongres Wanita Indonesia (KOWANI)

Korean Federation for Environmental Movement

Korean National Council of Women

MAMTA-Health Institute for Mother and Child

Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers

Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic, Inc.

Mauritius Family Planning Association

Mennonite Central Committee

Movimento Italiano Casalinghe (MOICA)

National Association for Resource Improvement (NARI)

National Coordinator for Human Rights

National Federation of Women for Democracy

National Women's Union of Romania

Organization for Defending Victims of Violence

Organisation tunisienne des jeunes médicins sans frontières

Paukuutit Inuit Women's Association of Canada

People's Decade of Human Rights Education (PDHRE)

Presbyterian Church (USA)

Programme national de prevention, de lutte et d'assistance humanitaire aux victimes des catastrophes naturelles (PRONAPLUCAN)

Real Women of Canada

Sto. Nino Organic Farmers, Inc.

Saviya Development Foundation

School Sisters of Notre Dame

"Social Ecology" Foundation

Soroptomist Union of Greece

Teresian Association

Tiye International

Unión de Escritores Y Artistas de Cuba

Union nationale de la femme tunisienne

Unione Intercontinentale Casalinghe (UNICA)

WINVISIBLE-Women with Visible and Invisible Disability

Womankind Worldwide

Women Against Rape

Women and Child Development Association

Women in Law and Development in Africa (WILDAF)

Women's Crisis Centre, The

Women's Forum Scotland

Women's Intercultural Network

World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC)

Roster

International Buddhist Foundation (IBF)

International Wages Due Lesbians

Liga Para Sa Mga Lolang Pilipina (LILA Pilipina)

Netherlands Council of Women

(b) To reclassify three organizations from Roster to special consultative status:

International Council of Psychologists

International Young Catholic Students

Universal Esperanto Association

DRAFT DECISION II

Resumed 1998 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

The Economic and Social Council decides to authorize the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to hold a resumed session for a period of one week in order to complete the work of its 1998 session.

II. Applications for consultative status and requests for reclassification received from non-governmental organizations

2. The Committee considered item 3 of its agenda at its 667th to 677th meetings, from 22 to 26 June and on 1 July 1998. It had before it a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing requests for reclassifications received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/1998/R.1) and a memorandum by the Secretary-General containing new applications for consultative status received from non-governmental organizations (E/C.2/1998/R.2 and Add.1-15).

A. New applications for consultative status

3. At its 651st meeting, on 18 May, the Committee had decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that special consultative status be granted to the European Council of WIZO Federations. At its 660th meeting, on 26 May, the Committee had considered the application in the light of new information that was made available to the members of the Committee.

4. At the same meeting, it was decided that the issue be left pending until the second part of the Committee's 1998 session.

5. At its 674th meeting, on 25 June, the Committee decided to reconsider the decision to recommend consultative status to the European Council of WIZO Federations and to defer the application to its 1999 session, because all of the outstanding issues concerning this application could not be resolved to the full satisfaction of several members of the Committee.

6. At its 673rd meeting, on 25 June, the representative of the United States of America requested a roll-call vote on the proposal to recommend special consultative status to the Union de Escritores Y Artistas de Cuba. The proposal was adopted by a roll-call vote of 12 to 1. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Chile, China, Costa Rica, Cuba, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Philippines, Russian Federation, Tunisia, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Against: United States of America.

7. At its 661st meeting, on 27 May, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the application of the Legal Research and Resource Centre for Human Rights to the second part of its 1998 session. At its 675th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee decided to defer the application of the Legal Research and Resource Centre for Human Rights to allow time for the organization to regularize its status as a non-governmental organization at the national level under revised legislation currently before the Egyptian Parliament.

8. At its 666th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of the application of Centre de researches, d'études, de documentation et d'information sur la femme (CREDIF) to the second part of its 1998 session. At its 675th meeting, the Committee decided to defer consideration of this organization's application to its 1999 session, pending clarification of its response to questions posed to the organization by the Committee.

9. Also at the same meeting, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the application of Jammu and Kashmir Council for Human Rights to a later date. The Committee also requested the organization to submit a revised application, using the correct terminology and nomenclature recognized by the United Nations.

10. At its 667th meeting, on 22 June, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that special consultative status be granted to Liga Para Sa Mga Lolang Pilipina (LILA Pilipina), Inc. At its 676th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee, following reconsideration of the application, decided to recommend to the Economic and Social Council that Roster status be granted to this organization.

11. At its 670th meeting, on 23 June, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the application of Saviya Development Foundation, a national organization applying for general consultative status, pending receipt of the results of consultations between the Secretariat and the Government of Sri Lanka.

12. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland expressed concern at the Committee's decision to defer consideration of an application from a national non-governmental organization in the absence of a comment on the application from that nation's Permanent Mission. The Mission in question had been advised by the Secretariat of the application in good time and had not responded. The decision to defer consideration was not supported by the procedures laid out in Council resolution 1996/31, which governed the Committee's methods of work. There existed no requirement for Member States to respond to Secretariat letters in this regard.

13. The representative of the United Kingdom stated further that this decision ran against the existing rules governing the work of the Committee, and stated his delegation's concern that the Committee, by taking this decision, was in danger of establishing a precedent that could ultimately be to the detriment of its work.

14. Following delivery of this statement, the representative of the United States concurred and asked that it be placed on the record.

15. At its 676th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that special consultative status be granted to Saviya Development Foundation.

16. At its 672nd meeting, on 24 June, the Committee decided to defer the application of MOA Foundation, New York, Inc. to a later date, pending the receipt from the organization of additional information, including an application submitted on behalf of its main office instead of its national office.

17. At its 675th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that special consultative status be granted to the Presbyterian Church (USA). The representative of the Russian Federation proposed, before the consideration of the above-mentioned application, that the Committee come to a definitive decision on the eligibility of churches and religious bodies as non-governmental organizations. The Committee continued consideration of the application following a statement by the Chairman, who emphasized that subsequent applications by other churches and religious bodies would be examined in a similar way, based on the principle of non-discrimination, and would be considered on an individual case-by-case basis.

18. At its 676th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee decided to recommend to the Council that special consultative status be granted to the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence. The representative of Ireland requested that the report reflect his delegation's disassociation from this decision.

19. The following applications were deferred pending:

(a) Further consideration by the Committee:

International Federation of Inspection Agencies

(b) Receipt of further information from the organization:

Association for the Protection of the Environment, Cairo, Egypt

Community Social Welfare Foundation

European Fertilizer Manufacturers Association

Human Rights Alliance

International Rescue Committee

Israel Women's Network

National Women's Council of Catalonia

South Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre

Union interafricaine des droits de l'homme

Women Justice Programme

Women's Exchange Program International

(c) A final decision by the Committee:

Action Health, Inc.

International Group of P&I Clubs

20. The Committee recommended that the Council grant consultative status to 83 non-governmental organizations (see sect. I above, draft decision I).

B. New requests for reclassification

21. The Committee decided to recommend that the Council reclassify three organizations from Roster to special consultative status (see sect. I above, draft decision I):

Special status

International Council of Psychologists

International Young Catholic Students

Universal Esperanto Association

22. The Committee decided to defer the applications of the following four organizations which had applied for reclassification to its resumed 1998 session:

Caritas Internationalis

International Council of Environmental Law

World Alliance of Reformed Churches

World Blind Union

C. Requests for reclassification deferred from the resumed 1997 session

23. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee had considered a request for reclassification to special consultative status of International P.E.N., an organization on

the Roster, and decided to defer further consideration of this organization's request to the second part of its 1998 session following the request of a delegation for additional time to study the information provided by the organization.

24. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee decided to defer consideration of this request.

III. Review of quadrennial reports deferred from the 1997 session

25. At its resumed 1997 session, the Committee had decided to defer consideration of the quadrennial reports of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations and the Mutual Assistance of the Latin American Government Oil Companies to its 1998 session. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, the Committee, noting that the requested clarifications had not yet been provided by either of these organizations, had decided to defer consideration of their reports to the second part of its 1998 session.

26. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee decided to defer consideration of the reports of the International Islamic Federation of Student Organizations and the Mutual Assistance of the Latin American Government Oil Companies.

IV. Implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 and decision 1995/304

27. The Committee considered item 6 of its agenda at its 676th and 677th meetings, on 26 June and 1 July 1998.

A. Strengthening of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Secretariat

28. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Non-Governmental Organizations Section of the Secretariat (E/1998/43). The report had been prepared pursuant to Council resolution 1997/58, in which the Council had requested the Secretary-General to set out specific proposals to ensure that the workload of the Section could be effectively and efficiently accomplished. In addition, the report before the Committee had incorporated a description of the expanded functions and responsibilities assumed by the Section in the current biennium (1998–1999).

B. Consideration of special reports

29. At its 664th meeting, on 28 May, after examining the additional information provided by Liberation, the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of the special report provided by the organization to the second part of its 1998 session.

30. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee decided to defer further consideration of the report.

31. At its 665th meeting, on 29 May, the Committee had decided that more detailed information be requested by the Secretariat from the Government of Colombia and the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights regarding the

accreditation, by Movimiento Indio Tupaj Amaru and the World Federation for Democratic Youth, two organizations in consultative status with the Council, of individuals known to belong to the revolutionary group Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC).

32. The information provided by the office of the Chairman of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights has been circulated by the Secretariat to members of the Committee for the resumed 1998 session of the Committee.

33. At its 676th meeting, on 26 June, the Committee had before it a letter from the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding the accreditation, by four organizations in consultative status with the Council, of individuals belonging to a terrorist group, to participate in the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Human Rights.

34. At the same meeting, the Committee decided that the following four organizations should each submit a special report in order to clarify the situation:

World Confederation of Labor

Pax Christi International

International Federation of Women in Legal Careers

Movement Against Racism and for Friendship Among Peoples

V. Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

35. The Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations held the second part of its 1998 session from 22 to 26 June and 1 July 1998. The Committee held 11 meetings (667th to 677th).

B. Resumed 1998 session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

36. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee decided to recommend that the Economic and Social Council adopt the following draft decision (see sect. I above, draft decision II), which was read out by the Chairman of the Committee:

> "The Economic and Social Council decides to authorize the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to hold a resumed session for a period of one week in order to complete the work of its 1997 session."

37. A statement of conference-servicing implications on the proposal, which was before the Committee, is contained in annex I to the present report.

38. At the same meeting, the Chairman made a statement in which he advised the Committee that he would report to the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council on the difficulties facing the Committee in completing its increased workload.

VI. Adoption of the report of the Committee on the second part of its 1998 session

39. At its 677th meeting, on 1 July, the Committee adopted the draft report contained in an informal paper, and authorized the Rapporteur to finalize the report in consultation with the members of the Committee, as appropriate.

Annex

Statement of conference-servicing implications of a proposed one-week extension of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations

Under the terms of the draft proposal, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations would recommend to the Economic and Social Council the holding of a one-week resumed session.

The proposed extension would entail the provision of 10 additional meetings (two meetings per day for five days), with interpretation services in the six official languages. There will be an additional 10 pages of in-session documentation, to be processed in six languages.

It is to be noted that the proposed timing of the resumed session (21–25 September or 14–18 December 1998) falls during the regular session of the General Assembly. During this period, all conference-servicing resources are reserved for the exclusive use of the Assembly and other related meetings of regional groups. Furthermore, not even subsidiary bodies of the Assembly are allowed to hold meetings at this time without the explicit authorization of the Assembly itself. It is therefore understood that the resumed session of the Committee, if approved, will be accommodated subject to the availability of conference facilities and services without adversely affecting the work of the Assembly.

The full cost of providing conference services for the resumed session of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations is estimated at $286,000. The extent to which the Organization's permanent capacity would need to be supplemented by temporary assistance resources can be determined only in the light of the calendar of conferences and meetings for the biennium 1998–1999. However, provision is made under section 27E, Conference services, of the 1998–1999 programme budget not only for meetings programmed at the time of the budget preparation but also for meetings authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings are consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years.

Consequently, should the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations decide to adopt the draft proposal, no additional appropriations would be required for the 1998–1999 programme budget.